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ABSTRACT

This report presents data from a study designed to determine the faculty and staff development needs of Alabama's two-year college faculty and staff and to measure the extent to which those needs are perceived as being met. Information is provided for gender, race, and employee classification; employee life plans; length of time employed; highest level of education attained and educational plans; faculty and staff development needs; ranked, self-perceived development priorities of faculty, staff, and administrators; perceptions about the amount and type of professional development available; participation in faculty or staff development last year; perceptions of institutional support; location and format preferences; and credit and non-credit development length and format preferences. Selected development topics within priority categories and a list of colleges returning ten or more surveys are appended. Highlights include the following: (1) 63% of Alabama's two year college employees in March 1997 were female, while 35% were male; (2) the likelihood of employees continuing to work in a community college was 70%; (3) 35% of employees had been employed at the college for less than five years, 28% for five-ten years, and 35% for 10 or more years; and (4) almost 90% of all respondents participated in less than two days of development activities during the past year. (HAA)

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A Report on the Faculty and Staff Development Needs and Preferences of Alabama's Two-Year College Employees

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Executive Summary

A Report
on the
Faculty and Staff Development Needs and Preferences of
Alabama's Two-Year College Employees

Lynn Sullivan Taber
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March 1997

Executive Summary

The taxpayers of Alabama expect the excellence, performance, and measurable effectiveness promised by their community, junior, and technical colleges. Ongoing faculty and staff development is required in order to keep these promises. Inadequate funding and fragmentation combine to reduce the availability of faculty and staff development opportunities.

The objectives of the study described in this report were to (a) determine the faculty and staff development needs of Alabama's community, junior, and technical colleges, and (b) to identify to what extent those needs are perceived as being met. Data were collected via a survey sent to randomly selected employees at each of 31 two-year colleges in Alabama. Forty-two percent of randomly identified employees completed the survey. At least one employee responded from 28 of the colleges, 17 colleges returned more than 10, and no surveys were returned from 3 of the colleges. The findings described herein represent the responses of 257 two-year college employees.

I. Demographics of Respondents

	Female	Male		
Gender:	63%[1]	35%		
Race:	African American	White	Other	
	16%	80%	4%	
Employee Classification:	Administrator	Faculty	Staff	
	31%	34%	33%	

II. Employee Life Plans

* Likelihood of Employees Continuing to Work in a Community College: 70%
* Probability of Employees Remaining in Alabama for the Next Ten Yrs. 90%

Finding: A stable employee group underscores the need for an ongoing faculty and staff development program that insures the updating required to deliver on the promises.

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[1] Percentages are rounded. Columns will not total 100% when all respondents did not answer a particular question.

III. Length of Time Employed at College

1 day - 5 years	35%
5+ - 10 years	28%
10+ years	35%

Findings: Those employed less than 5 years were more likely to view the development available to them in a positive fashion than were the other groups. These "newer" employees were also more likely to be interested in enrolling in an MA or EdD program in higher education administration in the next five years. Those employed between 5 and 10 years were most likely (30%) to rate the amount of faculty and staff development offered by the state as *poor* or below *average*. Implications of these findings may be found in the full report.

IV. Highest Level of Education Attained and Educational Plans

In general, the two-year college employee population is well-educated. With over 90% of respondents holding a two-year degree, it appears that there has been encouragement and support of development and possibly an emphasis in the hiring process to attract individuals with the highest level of formal education possible. Sixteen percent indicated that they are *likely* or *very likely* to enroll in an MA program in Higher Education Administration, and 18% noted that they were *likely* or *very likely* to begin an EdD program in Higher Education Administration in the next 5 years.

V. Faculty and Staff Development Needs

Respondents were asked not only to report their three most pressing development needs, but also what they believed the top development activities should be for the other two employee groups. That is, faculty indicated what was important to them, then recorded what they thought administrators and staff should focus on. The report goes in depth into important contrasts and comparisons that emerged from the data, including "**disparate intersections**"—topics that employee group one did not think was priority, but that one or two of the other employee groups believed should be a focus for group one. These "**intersections**" should be viewed as opportunities for greater communication and clarification of roles and responsibilities and when designing faculty and staff development programs. (See pages 7-10 in the full report.) The table below presents the top three development priorities for each employee group, as recorded by members of that employee group.

	Faculty Needs	Staff Needs	Administrator Needs
#1 Priority	Instructionally Related	Working Together	Organizational Issues
#2 Priority	Technology Related	Technology Related	Working Together
#3 Priority	Personal & Professional	Organizational Issues	Technology Related

See Appendix B for the individual development topics that make up each category.

VII. Perceptions About the Amount and Type of Professional Development Available

Employees generally rated the amount and type of professional development available to them as *average*. A question for discussion in the two-year college system might be, "Is average good enough?"

VIII. Participation in Faculty or Staff Development Last Year

The two most frequently checked categories of hours of participation in *faculty* development were "None" and "16+ Hours." For *staff*, the two most frequently checked categories of hours of participation were "None" and "1-3" hours. On average, employees participated in 7 to 9 hours of *faculty* development, and 6 to 7 hours of *staff* development last year. Almost 90% of all respondents participated in less than two days of development activities during the past year. For both faculty and staff, the number one response was that they had participated in zero development during the past year.

IX. Perceptions of Institutional Support

Employees are more positive about the amount of support for staff development than they are about the amount for faculty. However, the largest group of employees view the level of support as *average*. Again, we might ask the question, "Is average good enough?"

X. Location & Format Preference

Although the number one preference for location and format of development activities is delivery by in-person presenters on campus, many are open to participating in distance education, either on the home campus or at a site within one hour of the home campus.

XI. Credit and Non-Credit Development Length and Format Preferences

The preferred length and time for *non-credit* development for all employees is two hours during a workday. The most desirable length and time for *credit* development activities is a three-hour period, one time per week, either during the day or evening for 15 weeks (assuming a three-credit hour course).

Selected Recommendations

Because of their stable employee population, intense pressures for change in both education and training, and demands for labor force training, two-year colleges have opportunities for growth and development on many levels. Among the recommendations made in the full report are these:

1. Work toward implementing teaching/learning centers and staff development programs in each college and/or region.

2. Explore mentorships, off-campus "externships," and other nontraditional development delivery systems.

3. Put a statewide structure in place that tracks the progress made in each college and on a regional basis toward the implementation of an effective faculty and staff development program. Several individuals at each college should share responsibility, along with all of the employees, for keeping communication channels open, assessing needs, evaluating innovative efforts, and soliciting support. These individuals might become members of a statewide group that is accountable to the Chancellor and the Board.

4. Start by focusing on the needs identified in this survey as most important to employees, not on other topics or issues. Build trust.

5. Consider targeting those employed less than five years as possible innovators or partners in the development effort. There is some evidence that they might be more receptive to such requests and more positive about possible outcomes than employees who have been employed for a longer time. Use new employee orientation meetings to share information about faculty and staff development plans and opportunities.

6. The level of interest in pursuing advanced degrees in higher education administration suggests that programs at the state, regional, and/or college level should be put in place to support these aspirations. Funds could be raised or earmarked to provide competitive scholarships and special sabbatical arrangements for some graduate students. Colleges could support or partially support a semester-long internship for one graduate student each year. The student would gain valuable practical experience and the college would benefit from having an additional professional on the staff for four months. On a basic level, understanding supervisors could permit employees to leave work early on class evenings (if needed) or make other fair accommodations to facilitate employee development.

7. Distance learning opportunities must be explored further. Four colleges have downlink satellite capabilities. Some have access to fiber. However, most do

not presently have this equipment. Until these facilities can be obtained, use alternative distance learning methods, such as independent study or study courses that use videos and supplementary materials.

8. Use the "**disparate intersections**" (see pages 7-10 in the full report) discovered in the data to spark college-wide conversations about institutional priorities, roles and responsibilities, and development plans for the future.

9. Create incentives that will secure the active involvement in and leadership by creative and committed faculty and staff. Implement reward and recognition systems.

10. Share resources with other institutions, organizations, and individuals. Use expertise available in the college or in the state. Provide assistance with grant writing and seeking private donations of funds or equipment.

11. Evaluate progress of the design and implementation of faculty and staff development programs. Also assess faculty and staff opinions of the work that has been done. Incorporate their suggestions and respond to their concerns. Disseminate the results of the college's evaluations and assessments.

12. As part of the ground-laying work for developing a college-wide program, determine why some employees participated in no development activities at all, and explore what sorts of development opportunities were participated in by those who reported 16 or more hours of involvement last year

13. Place the development of effective staff and faculty development programs for two-year colleges high on the Postsecondary Commission's priority list. Keep this priority visible and require annual reports of a statewide committee that monitors these activities.

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A Report on the Faculty and Staff Development Needs and Preferences of Alabama's Two-Year College Employees

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March 1997

Introduction[1]

The taxpayers of Alabama expect the excellence, performance, and measurable effectiveness promised by their community, junior, and technical colleges. Continuous faculty and staff development is required in order to keep these promises. Inadequate funding and fragmentation combine to reduce the availability of faculty and staff development opportunities.

The objectives of this year-long research project are to (a) determine the faculty and staff development needs of Alabama's community, junior, and technical colleges, (b) to identify to what extent those needs are perceived as being met, and (c) to determine what cost-effective alternatives to meet identified needs would be acceptable to interested constituencies. This document reports results for objectives (a) and (b).[2]

Two surveys were distributed to each of Alabama's two-year institutions—an employee survey and another survey exploring each institution's faculty and staff development policies and procedures. Forty-two percent of randomly identified employees completed the employee survey. At least one employee responded from 28 of the institutions; 17 colleges returned more than 10; and no surveys were returned from 3 of the colleges.

Sixteen institutions responded to the second survey which requested information about their faculty and staff development policies and procedures. The results of that survey will be reported to Alabama education officials and two-year college presidents in a subsequent report.

The present report focuses on the results of the employee survey which sought employees' perceptions of and preferences for faculty and staff development. The survey appears in Appendix A. For additional information contact the study author.

I. Demographics

Table 1 outlines the respondents' gender, race, and employee classification and compares the figures to an approximation of the percentages in each category employed by Alabama's two-year colleges.

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[1] The author expresses appreciation to Bai Kang, doctoral student in higher education administration for his assistance in the survey distribution, data analysis, and preparing individual college reports. Thanks also go to colleagues who reviewed the survey and the report manuscript before they were disseminated. This study was partially supported by The University of Alabama.

[2] A subsequent report will explore cost-effective options (c).

Table 1

Study Participant Demographic Information

Characteristic	Study Percent[3]	Study N[4]	Alabama Two-Year College Percentage[5]	Alabama Two-Year College Numbers[6]
Gender				
Female	63.4	163	55	2,295
Male	35.4	91	45	1,905
Race				
African American	15.6	40	21.6	907
White	79.8	205	77.6	3,259
Other	2.3	6	0.7	29
Employee Classification				
Sr. Administrator	*9.3*	*24*	*0.7*	*31*
Administrator	*21.8*	*56*	*15*	*599*
Total Administrator	31.1	80	15.7	630
Faculty	33.5	86	48	2,020
Staff	32.7	84	37	1,550
Total Employees	**97.3**	**250**	**100.7**	**4,200**

II. Gender, Race, and Employee Classification

Table 1 shows that the approximate proportion of two-year college female

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[3] Percents do not add to 100% when all respondents do not provide an answer.

[4] Numbers do not add to 257 when all respondents do not provide an answer.

[5] Data from this column are from the Alabama Department of Postsecondary Education, 1995.

[6] For comparison purposes (to column 3), these numbers were obtained by multiplying the percentage in column 4 by the total number of employees: 4,200.

employees in Alabama is 55%, and the proportion who completed this survey is 63%. Women are represented in greater numbers in this survey (63%) than they are in Alabama's two-year college workforce (55%). Survey respondents are 80% white, and the state percentage is estimated to be 76%, a close comparison between the sample and the population. Sixteen percent of the respondents are African American versus 22% of Alabama's population. Administrators, faculty, and staff each represented about a third of the survey respondents. Because random sampling was used, there is no bias in the survey results due to differences between respondent and population percentages.

III. Employee Life Plans

Findings

The likelihood of respondents continuing to work in a community college (70%), and the probability of their remaining in Alabama for the next ten years (90%) indicate a relatively stable employee population. The exception would be those who will be leaving in the next few years due to retirement. However, last year, over 40% of those eligible chose to participate in an early retirement program, so the number of those coming close to retirement is now lower than it would have been one year ago.

Interpretation and Implications

A stable employee population indicates the need for constant upgrading and retraining, thus underscoring the importance of a statewide, coordinated faculty and staff development program.

Recommendations

Work toward implementing teaching/learning centers and staff development opportunities in each college and/or on a regional basis. Explore mentorships, off-campus "externships," and encouragement toward and support of the pursuit of formal education. Include the formation of development programs designed specifically to meet staff needs. Conduct a survey, annually or bi-annually, of faculty and staff perceptions of previous development opportunities and their needs for development for the near future. Programs, services, and opportunities should be modified or expanded accordingly. One or two individuals at each institution should be held accountable for faculty and staff development efforts and the evaluation and planning of such programs and activities. These individuals must be accountable, first to their president and to their colleagues, and then to the statewide body of two-year college employees, providing reports at the annual meeting of the Alabama College Association and other appropriate gatherings.

IV. Length of Time Employed

Roughly one-third of the respondents fell in each of these "length of employment" categories: 1 day to 5 years; 5 years plus to 10 years; and more than 10 years.

Findings

Table 2

Total Number of Years of Employment at Current College

	Study Percent[7]	*Study N*	*AL Two-Year College Percent*
1 day - 5 years	34.6	89	33.2
5 years+ - 10 years	28.4	73	16.0
10 years+ - 20 years	22.2	57	32.0
20 years+	12.8	33	18.4

Few factors (questions on the survey) showed differences between individuals employed at their colleges for varying lengths of time. The differences observed included the following:

* Those employed less than 5 years were more *likely* or *very likely* to be part of the 16% considering entering a master's or the 18% considering a doctoral program in higher education administration in the next five years.
* Those employed less than 5 years were *more likely* to rate the type of development opportunities available through the state as *excellent* (15%).
* Forty percent of those employed less than 5 years believe the *amount* offered by the state was *above average* or *excellent*.
* Those employed between 5 and 10 years were most *likely (30%)* to rate the *amount* of faculty and staff development offered by the state as *poor* or *below average*.

Interpretation and Implications

The "rose colored glasses" phenomenon, energy, and excitement that occurs for some employees in the beginning of their careers or when they move into a new position, may encourage these employees to view possibilities more positively than those who have been part of the system longer. Those employed 5 years or less report more plans (formal or informal) than the other employee groups to further their education, reinforcing the idea that there is a tendency for newer employees to want to engage in additional learning. Cynics might suggest that those employees new to the system just haven't learned yet that there isn't much offered in Alabama. This view is supported to some extent by the finding that those employed between 5 and 10 years were most *likely* to rate the amount of faculty and staff development as *poor* or *below average* (30%). This could spotlight an "awakening" to the "true" amount and type of faculty and staff development available in Alabama, or be seen as a "disenchantment" period that may or may not have to do with the

[7] Column percents do not add to 100% when all respondents do not answer a question.

availability of faculty and staff development opportunities per se.

Recommendations

Look to those employed five years or less to participate in planning for pilot projects, such as instituting a teaching/learning center or a "working together" effort. This does not mean that others should be ignored. Clearly other employees want and need faculty and/or staff development. However, there may be a pocket of energy that can supplement the thrust needed to institute new efforts.

Another recommendation is to present information about faculty and staff development at new employee orientations. Solicit membership from among new employees on college task forces working to improve staff and faculty development at the college.

V. Highest Level of Education Attained & Educational Plans

Findings

* Ninety percent of Alabama's two-year college employees have attained at least a two-year college degree.
* The highest level of education for 15% of the employees is the bachelor's degree; 42% have received the master's degree; and 14% have earned the Ed.D., Ph.D., or a professional degree.
* Sixteen percent of the respondents indicated that they would be *likely* or *very likely* to enroll in an MA program in higher education administration in the next five years.
* Eighteen percent stated that they would be *likely* or *very likely* to enroll in an EdD program in higher education administration in the next five years.

When we extrapolate the findings of this study to the larger population of *all* two-year college employees in Alabama (4,200), we find that approximately 672 employees are *likely* or *very likely* to enroll in an MA program in higher education administration, and about 714 are *likely* or *very likely* to enroll in a doctoral program in higher education in the next five years.

Interpretation and Implications

In general, the two-year college employee population is well-educated. With over 90% of the employees holding a two-year degree, it appears that there has been encouragement to support employee development and possibly an emphasis in the hiring process to attract individuals with the highest level of formal education possible.

Recommendations

Interest in pursuing advanced degrees in higher education administration suggests that programs at the state, regional, or institutional level should be put in place to support these aspirations, as they would be beneficial to achieving college objectives. Funds could be raised or earmarked to provide competitive scholarships and special sabbatical arrangements for some of these graduate students. Colleges could support or partially support a semester-long internship for one student each

year. The student gains valuable practical experience and the institution benefits from an additional professional on the staff for four months.

Institutional reviews of staff and faculty development policies that govern the pursuit of formal education by full-time employees should be conducted. Modifications may be required.

Distance learning opportunities must be explored by the four institutions that have satellite downlinks. Other formats, such as using a series of videos and supplementary materials, may be possible for selected coursework. Independent study is appropriate for one or two courses, depending on what the faculty advisor and student decide. These methods make it possible for students to work in their home towns, especially if they have access to a well-stocked library and/or the internet.

VI. Faculty and Staff Development Needs

Findings

[8]Employees were asked to suggest faculty and staff development priorities for other employee groups, as well as for their own. For example, faculty were asked what development opportunities were needed for administrators and staff, as well as for faculty. Table 3 shows the top three prioritized development needs for two-year college faculty and staff, **as perceived by the entire group**.

Table 3
Prioritized Faculty, Staff, and Administrator Development Needs As *Perceived by the Total Group* of Respondents

Faculty Needs (# of times mentioned)[9]	Staff Needs (# of times mentioned)	Administrator Needs (# of times mentioned)
Instructionally Related[10] (209)	Working Together (221)	Organizational Issues (225)
Technology Related (143)	Technology Related (150)	Technology Related (150)
Organizational Issues (73)	Organizational Issues (114)	Management & Supervision (70)

The first priority for faculty was *instructionally-related development*, for the

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[8] This question is asked because this information can provide us with insights into where there might be problem areas (or "disparate intersections") across employee classification boundaries that could benefit from intervention, possibly through employee development activities. See the "Interpretation and Implications" and "Recommendations" portions of this section of the report.

[9] Each respondent could enter up to *three* priority needs.

[10] Refer to Appendix B for examples of specific development needs within each of these categories.

staff, *working together*, and for administrators, *organizational issues*. The first and last mentioned seem intuitively correct, but more clarification on the *working together* priority for staff is in order. It appears that there may be high expectations by the administration and the faculty for the staff to perform the *working together* function on behalf of the entire institution. Such an expectation, if true, is unrealistic and may put a large amount of pressure on college staff.

Technology-related topics were second of the top three priorities for each of the three employee groups. Given the minimal access to satellite, fiber, hardware, and software throughout the two-year college system in Alabama, this is an understandable interest. Learning specific software packages was mentioned 59 times, as was the need for *Internet skills*. These skills are possibly also needed on home computers used to process work related to the college. There should be an objective during the next few years to improve the technology available to Alabama's two-year colleges. The *technology-related* priorities may have been mentioned in anticipation of additional equipment becoming available.

Priorities most frequently mentioned in the *organizational issues* category, were *continuous improvement, legal issues, TQM,* and *organizational development.* This leads us to believe that several colleges are exploring or working with the TQM/continuous improvement concepts. Shelton State Community College implemented TQM several years ago.

Finally, managing, supervising, evaluating, and motivating employees, department chair skills, and managing instruction were the development needs mentioned most often by and about administrators.

Interesting contrasts—or "**disparate intersections**"—between what one group felt was most important for themselves and what development others thought was most important for that group emerged. Several examples are listed here:

For Faculty:

* Thirty-three administrators and staff indicated that faculty could use training toward instructional improvement. Zero faculty listed this objective as a priority. (However, many faculty indicated a need for training in instructional methods and strategies.)
* Five respondents (4 administrators and 1 staff member) mentioned student retention as a priority; zero faculty saw this as a priority need.
* More administrators (6) and staff (2) than faculty (2) noted the importance of customer service training for faculty.
* Twenty-two administrators and staff believe that collaboration and teamwork is a priority area for faculty, but only 8 faculty agreed.
* Fourteen administrators and staff indicated that distance learning was an important area for faculty development. Five faculty agreed.
* Faculty took more notice of the need to deal with part-time faculty issues (7) than did administrators (1) or staff (3).
* Fifteen staff and 7 administrators believed that collaboration and teamwork was important for faculty. Only 8 faculty agreed that this category fell among their top three needs.
* Customer service provided by faculty was seen as important by 6 administrators and 2 staff, but just 2 faculty.

* Faculty saw more need for themselves to learn specific software packages (24) than did staff (6) or administrators(4).
* While just 3 faculty believed that continuous improvement ranked among their top 3 needs, 15 administrators and staff saw this category as an important one for faculty.
* Zero administrators thought career development was important for faculty, yet 12 faculty and 19 staff indicated that it should be among the top 3 priorities for the faculty.

For Staff:

* Seventy-four administrators and faculty believe customer service should be a high priority for college staff development, compared to 29 staff who agreed.
* Forty-four administrators and faculty listed Internet skills as important for staff, compared to the 25 staff who indicated that this was a priority for themselves.
* More administrators and faculty (12) than staff (5) believed that legal issues were an important consideration for staff.

For Administrators:

* Four faculty indicated that administrators should streamline registration. This task was not mentioned by staff or administrators.
* Forty-nine staff and faculty, compared to 13 administrators, noted that collaboration and teamwork should be among administrators' top 3 priorities. Administrators were more likely to see this as a role for staff.
* A similar contrast occurred with the category "conflict resolution." Only 4 administrators saw this as a critical development issue for themselves, whereas 15 staff and 6 faculty believed that more training in conflict resolution is required for administrators.
* More faculty (13) and staff (20) believe that administrators should focus on TQM. This is in contrast to just 10 administrators who saw TQM as a priority area for their own development.
* Twenty-one faculty and staff believed that college budgeting was an area that could benefit from development activities for administrators. Just 4 administrators agreed.
* Twenty-two staff and faculty wrote that career development was important for administrators, while just 2 administrators agreed.

Interpretations and Implications

Several "**disparate intersections**" of note have emerged. These concern the following issues:

* TQM
* customer service
* working together
* career development

Each of these issues provide opportunities for college-wide discussions about priorities, roles, and responsibilities.

Recommendations

With regard to the "**disparate intersections**" where one or two employee groups believed that the other employee group needed training in areas not indicated by the target group as critical to them at this time, college employees should reflect upon these differences. Outcomes of these discussions could include shedding light on different perceptions about such priorities as *customer relations* or *continuous improvement*, clarifying roles and responsibilities, focusing on the college's mission, and perhaps uncovering some surprises or experiencing breakthroughs. These discussions might be a fruitful activity for kick-off meetings at the beginning of the fall and/or spring terms. Follow-up would be critical, with one or two people directly assigned the responsibility (by the president) of following up on the decisions of the group. Perhaps these would be the same people given primary responsibility to facilitate the development and institutionalization of a college-wide faculty and staff development program.

VII. Ranked, Self-Perceived Development Priorities of Faculty, Staff, and Administrators

These data also provide us with a birds-eye view of the priorities of each employee group solely for themselves. The previous section detailed what the two other employee categories believed should be development priorities for the third employee group. This section presents what each employee group sees as priority areas of development for themselves. Table 4 outlines the self-perceived priorities of each separate group.

Findings

Table 4
Prioritized *Self-Perceived* Faculty, Staff, and Administrator Development Needs

Faculty Needs (# of times mentioned)	Staff Needs (# of times mentioned)	Administrator Needs (# of times mentioned)
Instructionally Related (80)	Working Together (69)	Organizational Issues (68)
Technology Related (66)	Technology Related (56)	Working Together (38)
Personal & Professional (24)	Organizational Issues (40)	Technology Related (20)

Interpretations and Implications

When we compare the priorities of each employee group for themselves (Table 4) and the priorities for each employee group by the total group of respondents, made up of employees of all categories (Table 3), we observe several differences. Faculty indicated their third priority choice had to do with *personal and professional issues*, such as *career development* and *understanding one's self and how it relates to one's profession*. The entire group, however, was more

inclined to believe that faculty needed to work on *organizational issues*, primarily *continuous improvement*. Staff needs emerged in the same rank order as when the entire group commented. Administrators saw *working together* as their second ranked item, while *working together* did not appear in the top three items when the total group responses were tallied. Instead, the total group saw that further development in *management and supervision skills* would be helpful.

Recommendations

It is strongly suggested that current faculty and staff development efforts focus on the priorities identified by the employees themselves, rather than the priorities of all employee groups for the third group. Buy-in and participation are critical to the establishment and institutionalization of a faculty and staff development structure in the college and throughout the state. These are best attained when the system responds first to what the potential participants indicate they need.

After reviewing the findings described in this and the previous section, determine statewide and college wide faculty and staff development priorities for the coming two to five years. Through the development of an appropriate structure (some suggestions were made about this earlier in this document), create incentives to secure involvement of creative and committed faculty and staff in putting a responsive, effective faculty and staff development program in place. Implement reward and recognition systems. Share resources with other institutions and organizations. Use expertise available locally, in the region, or in the state. Provide assistance with grant writing and seeking private donations of funds or equipment.

VIII. Perceptions About the Amount and Type of Professional Development Available

Findings

When provided answer choices of *excellent, above average, average, below average*, or *poor*, most employees rated the amount and type of staff and faculty development available to them as *average*. They are somewhat more pleased with the type and amount offered by their colleges than they are with the type and amount of development offered by the state.

Interpretations and Implications

On the whole, employees believe that there is room for improvement in the amount and type of staff and faculty development available to them from their colleges and from the State of Alabama.

Recommendations

As part of a structure that is responsive to ongoing faculty and staff development needs, employees must have avenues of communication within their individual colleges, region, the state postsecondary officials, and to the ACA leadership to communicate their needs. Annual or bi-annual needs assessment surveys on faculty and staff development could be conducted with statewide distribution of the results. One or two individuals from each college should be

responsible for making results known and modifying, deleting, or instituting new programs, as required.

IX. Participation in Faculty or Staff Development Last Year

Findings

The two most frequently checked categories of hours of participation in faculty development are "none" and "16+ Hours." More analysis should be conducted to interpret this finding. For staff, the two most frequently checked categories of hours of participation in staff development were "None" and "1-3" hours. On average, employees participated in 7 to 9 hours of *faculty* development activities during the past year. *Staff* participated in between 6 and 7 hours of development last year. **Almost 90% of all respondents participated in less than two days of development activities during the past year. For both faculty and staff, the number one response was that they had participated in zero development during the past year.**

Interpretations and Implications

Depending upon how many hours of participation in staff and faculty development activities one believes to be sufficient or appropriate for college employees, the judgment of the adequacy of this participation level varies. It must also be taken into consideration that a limitation of this study is that "development" was not directly defined. It was indirectly defined via the "thought" list of development topics on the last page of the survey (see Appendix A). In fact, it turned out that most of the responses came from the list provided, so that while the survey gave the appearance of featuring open-ended questions regarding faculty and staff development needs, in fact respondents seemed to draw heavily from the provided list. Therefore, it is possible that employees participated in activities that enhanced their skills but did not interpret those activities as development.

Another point is that quantity says nothing about quality or appropriateness or effectiveness of the training. Research in this area as development programs grow in Alabama will assist their success and effectiveness.

Recommendations

Find out why some employees did not participate. Was it because no appropriate development was available? Could an individual get supervisor approval? Is there a lack of appropriate equipment upon which to train? Is there a lack of funds set aside for development activities? Is there commitment from the president for a college-wide development program? Were the programs or activities held at inconvenient times or in inconvenient locations?

Explore the type of development participated in by those who reported 16 or more hours of activity last year. Did most employees attend conferences? Which ones and at whose cost? Did employees participate in workshops or in credit courses? These types of questions would fill in each college's base of knowledge about the development activities currently available and taken advantage of most frequently by the faculty.

The information gained by asking the above questions will provide the institution with a better sense of employee needs and attitudes.

X. Perceptions of Institutional Support

Findings

Employees are more positive about the amount of institutional support for *staff* than they are about the amount for *faculty*. Fifty-six of the respondents rated support for staff development as *above average* or *excellent*, while 42% have the same opinions about faculty development. There is a group of 20% who rate institutional support for staff development as *poor* or *below average*, and 16% believe the same about faculty development.

Interpretations and Implications

A bar graph (not shown here) of the employees' view of institutional support displays an essentially a normal curve, suggesting that employee perceptions of institutional support are among those distributions to be expected. Institutions should also ask, however, if the most common perceptions of institutional support as *average* is enough. Also, should colleges be satisfied with 20% and 16% of employee groups who believe support is *poor* or *below average*? Or would it be preferable to reduce these percentages?

Recommendations

Determine the institution's goal(s) to modify these perceptions. Assess employees annually or biannually to track their views of institutional support. Make adjustments or probe further as required.

XI. Location & Format Preferences

Findings

Although the number one preference is that faculty and staff development be delivered by in-person presenters on campus (93% were *likely* or *very likely* to attend development activities presented in this format), many are open to participating in distance education, either on the home campus (73% were *likely* or *very likely*), or at a site within one-hour driving time from the home campus (43% were *likely* or *very likely* to participate).

Interpretations and Implications

Faculty and staff have long preferred on-campus presenters. This type of activity is convenient, particularly if it is held during the workday. One difficulty with building a program around the more traditional seminar/workshop format is that current research fails to identify lasting effects or change as a result of participation in these activities. An exception to this may occur when the experience is part of a larger, ongoing change process, such as the implementation of TQM throughout an organization.

Recommendations

Initially offer development opportunities featuring in-person presenters on campus, and experiment with forms of distance education held either on the home campus or within one hour of campus. Partner with other organizations to sponsor more efficiently these development opportunities. Work toward incorporating the traditional workshop format into longer range, organization-wide development and change processes. One approach would be to select a one- or two-year theme about which the majority of development activities would be focused. Two themes might be more appropriate--one for faculty, such as teaching and learning, and one for staff designed to increase working together skills.

XI. Credit and Non-Credit Development Length and Format Preferences

Findings

The most preferred length and time for *non-credit* activities for all employees is two hours during the workday. The most preferred length and time for *credit* development activities is a three-hour period, one time per week, either during the day or evening for 15 weeks (assuming a three-credit hour course).

Interpretations and Implications

These length and format preferences are traditional.

Recommendation

It would be advisable to start the process of creating college-wide development programs using the currently preferred two hours per workday format. Support for employees pursuing formal degree programs will likely require institutional support for individuals attending classes one or two nights per week for 15 weeks. This might involve the necessity to leave work early on class days. Presidential and administrative support must be visible and positive.

XII. Concluding Thoughts

Alabama two-year college employees have indicated an interest in more faculty and staff development opportunities, especially in (a) *instructionally-related* topics, (b) *working together through collaboration and teamwork*, (c) *technology-related* topics, and (d) *organizational issues*. From study data it appears that the development of a statewide structure for two-year college faculty and staff development is essential, if the colleges will be able to keep their promises to the citizens of Alabama. Having a stable employee population contributes to the need for ongoing updating of skills, perspectives, behaviors, and techniques. Lack of required resources to improve development opportunities and institutional changes, many of which would benefit from technological services and equipment, is clearly a serious problem. Specific attention should be paid to creative ways to garner needed resources, including partnerships with other colleges, institutions, for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, and individuals. Talent and expertise available in the two-year college system should be shared.

Post Script

The next study in this series will explore current two-year institutions' faculty and staff development policies and procedures and possible collaborative activities (including distance learning) that would make the provision of development programs more cost-effective.

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APPENDIX A–FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

ALABAMA PUBLIC COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGE FACULTY AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT SURVEY

Your president has agreed to have a few randomly selected employees of your college participate in this survey. The survey focuses on your faculty and staff development needs. Please mail or fax the completed survey as soon as possible to the location noted at the bottom of each page. Only a few employees have been randomly selected at each public two-year college in the state, so your participation is very important. The results will be available before the end of the year. Thank you very much for your participation!

Lynn Taber
The University of Alabama

A. General Faculty and Staff Development Issues

1. My opinion of the ***amount*** of professional staff or faculty development available to me through the college or the state is (circle one number for each item):

		Poor	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Excellent
a.	***Amount*** through the college.	1	2	3	4	5
b.	***Amount*** through the state.	1	2	3	4	5

2. My opinion of the ***type*** of professional staff or faculty development available to me through the college or the state is:

a.	***type*** through the college.	1	2	3	4	5
b.	***type*** through the state.	1	2	3	4	5

3. The major source of my continuing professional development is (fill in the blank) ____ _____.

4.	In general, I would rate the support for ***faculty*** development at this college as (circle one):	1	2	3	4	5

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		Poor	Average	Below Average	Average	Above Excellent
5.	In general, I would rate the support for ***staff*** development at this college as:	1	2	3	4	5

6. Estimate the number of each clock hours of ***faculty*** development, sponsored by your college, in which you have participated in the last twelve months (check one box):

☐ None ☐ 1-3 hrs. ☐ 4-6 hrs.
☐ 7-9 hrs. ☐ 10-12 hrs. ☐ 13-15 hrs. ☐ 16 or more hours

Please give at least one example of a topic addressed: _____.

7. Estimate the number of clock hours of ***staff*** development, sponsored by your college, in which you have participated in the last twelve months (check one box):

☐ None ☐ 1-3 hrs. ☐ 4-6 hrs.
☐ 7-9 hrs. ☐ 10-12 hrs. ☐ 13-15 hrs. ☐ 16 or more hours

Please give at least one example of a topic addressed: _____.

8. Does your **college** have capability for receiving (downlink) or sending (uplink) distance learning programming?

Uplink	Downlink
☐ No	☐ No
☐ Yes	☐ Yes
☐ Don't Know	☐ Don't Know

9. Does anyone in the **town** in which the college is located have the capability for receiving (downlink) or sending (uplink) distance learning programming?

Uplink	Downlink
☐ No	☐ No
☐ Yes	☐ Yes
☐ Don't Know	☐ Don't Know

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B. **Location Issues**

Please indicate how likely it is that you would participate in faculty or staff development activities in the following locations:

(Circle one number for each question.)

		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
1.	On-campus, with "in-person" presenters	1	2	3	4	5
2.	On-campus, in a distance education format, such as teleconferencing or in a two-way distance education classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3.	At a location within one hour of your campus, with "in-person" presenters	1	2	3	4	5
4.	At a location within one hour of your campus, with a distance education format	1	2	3	4	5
5.	At The University of Alabama (in Tuscaloosa) with "in person presenters"	1	2	3	4	5
6.	At the University of Alabama (in Tuscaloosa) with a distance education format	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5
8.	Other: _____	1	2	3	4	5

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C. **Length and Format of Non-Credit Training/Educational Programs**

Indicate your preference for these alternative lengths of ***non-credit*** faculty or staff development programs. Place a "1" next to the time frames you would be most inclined to attend, and place a "3" next to the time frame you would be least inclined to attend. Place a "2" next to items that are not "1s" or "3s". Please be sure to write a number in every blank.

Daytime/Less than 1 week:		Preference #
1.	Two Hours - During Work Day	_____
2.	Three to Four Hours - During Work Day	_____
3.	One Work Day - During Work Day	_____
4.	One & One-Half Work Days	_____
5.	Two Work Days	_____
6.	Other: _____	_____

Weekend:		
1.	One Weekend Day	_____
2.	Two Weekend Days	_____
3.	Each of the Four Weekends in One Month (Friday evening and all day Saturday)	_____
4.	Other: _____	_____

One Week or Longer:		
1.	One Week Institute Within 3 hrs. Drive	_____
2.	One Week Institute Overseas	_____
3.	Other: _____	_____

Other:		
1.	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____

D. **Length and Format of Credit Training/Educational Program**

Indicate your preference for these alternative formats of ***credit*** faculty or staff development courses or programs. Place a "1" next to the formats you would be most inclined to attend, and place a "3" next to the formats you would be least inclined to attend. Place a "2" in all other spaces. Please be certain to write a number in every blank.

Daytime		Preference #
1.	Three hours, once a week for 15 weeks, during weekday.	_____
2.	Other (must add up to 42-45 hours): _____	_____

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Evening — Preference #

1. Three hours, once a week for 15 weeks, on a weekday evening _____
2. Three hours, twice a week for 7 weeks _____
3. One and one half hours two evenings per week for 15 weeks _____
4. Other: _____ _____

Weekend

1. Seven Saturdays from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. (every other Saturday): _____
2. Four Friday Evening/Saturday all day combinations (Every third weekend): _____
3. Other: _____ _____

One Week or Longer

1. One week institute within 3 hour drive _____
2. One week institute in the U.S., but further than a 3 hr. drive _____
3. One week institute in another country _____
4. Other: _____ _____

Ongoing

1. Relationship with a mentor _____
2. Other: _____ _____
3. Other: _____ _____

E. **Regardless of your current position, please answer all three sections.**

(See attached list of professional development topics. You are not restricted to identifying topics included on this list. The list is meant for use as a reference only.)

1. Identify the three most needed subject areas of ***faculty*** development at your institution.

   a.

   b.

   c.

2. Identify the three most needed subject areas of professional development for ***administrators*** at your institution.

   a.

   b.

   c.

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3. Identify the three most needed subject areas of professional development for non-administrative *staff* at your institution.

a.

b.

c.

F. **Formal Educational Program Plans**

		Very Unlikely	Unlikely	Neutral	Likely	Very Likely
1.	How likely are you to enroll in a master's degree program in higher education administration in the next five years? (Circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
	Comments:					
2.	How likely are you to enroll in a doctoral program in higher education administration in the next five years? (Circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
	Comments:					
3.	How likely are you to continue your career in a community college? (Circle one)	1	2	3	4	5
	Comments:					
4.	How likely are you continue to reside in Alabama for the next ten years?	1	2	3	4	5
	Comments:					

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Demographic Information

1. Check one box in each list:

Gender:	Race:	Classification:	Total number of years employed at this college:
☐ Male	☐ African American	☐ Sr. Administrator	☐ 1 day - 5 years
☐ Female	☐ White	☐ Faculty	☐ 6 years - 10 years
	☐ Other: ____	☐ Administrator	☐ 11 years 20 years
		☐ Staff	☐ 21 years - 50 years

2. Highest level of education you have completed (check one):

☐ Less than high school diploma or G.E.D.
☐ G.E.D.
☐ High School/Diploma
☐ Some College
☐ Certificate
☐ Two-year College degree
☐ Bachelor's degree
☐ Master's degree
☐ Ed.D./Ph.D./Prof. degree

3. Print the name of the college where you are employed:_____

A Partial List of Faculty and Staff Professional Development Topics

___ instructional improvement
___ curriculum development/instructional design
___ career development for employees
___ career development/exploration for students
___ understanding self and relation to professional behavior
___ instructional methods, strategies, and techniques
___ outcomes indicators and/or assessment
___ the role and responsibilities of the department chair
___ managing instructional programs
___ organizational change processes & how to implement
___ collaboration and teamwork
___ partnerships with the community
___ ramifications of collaborative partnerships on the business/financial services office
___ specific software packages (e.g. word processing, spread sheets)
___ multiculturism and diversity
___ discipline-specific professional development
___ continuous improvement
___ distance teaching, learning, communication
___ part-time/adjunct faculty issues
___ organizational development
___ tech prep
___ learning styles
___ teaching adult students
___ college planning
___ college budgeting
___ conflict resolution
___ instructional technology
___ internet skills
___ total quality management
___ writing skills
___ legal issues
___ supervision
___ customer service skills

You have now completed the questionnaire. Thank you for taking part of your busy day to participate. Please mail the questionnaire in the next seven days or sooner, or return it via fax my attention at (205) 348-2161. The results of this study will be available by the end of the year.

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APPENDIX B
Selected Development Topics Within Priority Categories

Instructionally Related
- instructional improvement
- curriculum development
- instructional design
- instructional methods & strategies
- discipline-specific professional development
- distance teaching/learning
- part-time faculty issues
- teaching adult students
- teaching part-time students

Working Together
- collaboration and teamwork/building teams
- interpersonal skills
- conflict resolution
- customer service
- communication/listening
- partnerships with the community

Organizational Issues
- organizational development
- TQM
- continuous improvement
- organizational change process and how to implement
- college budget & planning
- outcomes indicators
- legal issues
- multiculturalism & diversity
- college image

Technology Related
- instructional technology
- internet skills
- specific software packages
- keeping current
- assess computer/technology needs in an organization
- solving computer network problems

Management & Supervision
- managing, supervising, evaluating & motivating employees
- department chair skills
- managing instruction
- mentoring techniques
- leadership development
- managing technology

Personal & Professional
- career development for employees
- career development for students
- career development
- understanding myself and the relationship of my self to my profession
- stress management

APPENDIX C
List of Colleges Returning Ten or More Surveys

These colleges may request a summary report of the findings for their institution. These results may then be compared to the statewide findings.

Alabama Aviation and Technology
Bessemer
Bevill
Calhoun
Central Alabama
Chattahoochee
Jefferson Davis Atmore
Faulkner
Jefferson
MacArthur
Northeast Alabama
Shelton State
Southern Union
Sparks
Wallace—Selma
Lurleen Wallace
Trenholm

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